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**Media Contact:**

Dianne Champion, District Director  
Vermont Department of Health  
802-251-2101

Celebrate National Public Health Week April 1-7  
*Public Health is ROI: Save Money. Save Lives.*

**2013 County Health Rankings Detail Health Disparities in the Healthiest State**

BRATTLEBORO – Vermont has been ranked #1 healthiest in *America's Health Rankings* for many years in a row. But Vermonters are not equally healthy, as reported in the latest *County Health Rankings* by the University of Wisconsin Population Health Institute and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation.

Now available at [www.countyhealthrankings.org](http://www.countyhealthrankings.org), the 2013 report ranks Chittenden County as the healthiest in the state, and Essex and Orleans Counties as least healthy. The rankings are based on health outcomes – length of life and quality of life – and health factors such as smoking, alcohol use, physical activity, access to quality health care, income, education, employment and the built environment.

“While progress has been made to improve some health indicators it is clear that more work is needed,” said Dianne Champion, director for the Brattleboro district office of the Health Department. “Health behaviors such as smoking and binge drinking remain higher in Windham County than other parts of the state.”

Partnerships have formed throughout Windham County working to prevent underage drinking, smoking, and childhood exposure to second hand smoke. A collaborative effort by these community partners has resulted in the development of smoke free policies in 3 new multiunit apartment complexes in Brattleboro.

“It is this focus on partnership and relationship building that is central to the creation of policies and systems that support improved health outcomes,” Champion said.

Among the findings in the 2013 *County Health Rankings*:

- 12% of adults in Windham County report poor or fair health, compared to 8% of adults in Chittenden County.
- 17% of adults in Windham County smoke, compared to 12% in Chittenden County.
- 17% of adults in Windham County report they are physically inactive, compared to 15% in Chittenden County.

- 4% report limited access to healthy foods in Windham County, compared to 4% in Chittenden County.

The *County Health Rankings* rank the overall health of nearly every county in all 50 states. Nationally, the data revealed that unhealthy counties have more than twice the rate of premature deaths than healthy ones and childhood poverty rates are twice as high in unhealthy counties. The *Rankings* allow counties to see how they compare to other counties within the state based on a range of factors that influence health.

### **Celebrate Health during National Public Health Week**

During National Public Health Week April 1-7, the Vermont Department of Health will highlight the daily work of public health, and will launch *Healthy Vermonters 2020* – the state health assessment that documents the health status of Vermonters at the start of the decade, and sets the goals that will guide the work of public health through 2020.

For health news, information and alerts, visit [www.healthvermont.gov](http://www.healthvermont.gov), follow us on Twitter [twitter.com/healthvermont](https://twitter.com/healthvermont), and join us on the Brattleboro district office Facebook page.

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